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Claim Amendments

1. (currently amended) A method for communicating between a ~~service control point (SCP)~~, a service switching point (SSP) and an external Intelligent Peripheral (IP), comprising the steps of:

establishing a connection between the SSP and the external IP; and

while the connection between the SSP and the IP exists, transporting an Intelligent Network Application Part (INAP) operation inside a pass along message between the SSP and the IP where the pass along message includes a first part of fixed length and a second part of variable length, the first part defining a type of message of the second part;

in response to INAP operation inside said pass along message, performing the INAP operation by the IP.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the pass along message can be sent in either direction to transfer information.

3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the first part is one byte in length.

4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the second part is an optional part of variable length from two to two hundred fifty seven bytes.

5. (original) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step of:
using bytes between numbers two hundred one and two hundred fifty seven of said pass along message for transferring the INAP operations.

6. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein said INAP operation transferred is a play announcement (PA) operation.

7. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein said INAP operation transferred is a prompt and collect user information (PCUI) operation.

8. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein said INAP operation is a return report (RR) operation.

9. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein said INAP operation is a specialized resource report (SRR) operation.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the SSP receives a play announcement operation from a transaction capability application part message sent from the a